

Vocab-o-Gram

Description

Vocab-o-Gram is a productive strategy for both comprehension and vocabulary. It is an appropriate strategy for use with fiction. A Vocab-o-Gram is a classification chart that includes the elements of story structure. Because students in middle grades and high school are familiar with story structure, if they are given some essential words, they can anticipate or predict what might be likely to happen.

Students are given selected words or phrases from a story and asked to organize them according to the story elements. The organized groups of words enable students to formulate ideas and make predictions about the story. After students read, they return to their Vocab-o-Gram charts and reevaluate their predictions and clarify vocabulary as necessary.

Steps

1. Select 10–20 words and phrases from a story that may reflect characters, setting, feelings, key ideas, or events. Present the words to students on the board or on an overhead.
2. Give students a copy of the Vocab-o-Gram chart. Have them work in pairs or small groups to share what they know about the words. They then decide which words give clues to the different elements of a story and place the words in the appropriate category on their charts. They may place words in more than one category.
3. Conduct a class discussion about students' placement of the words and their reasoning for the placement. Have students share their knowledge of words that may be unfamiliar.
4. After students have completed this discussion, they will have formed some preliminary ideas about the story. Have them state their preliminary ideas as predictions about the characters, events, and so on.
5. Suggest that each student also formulate one or two specific questions to answer.
6. After reading, return to the Vocab-o-Gram and refine their ideas. Review the vocabulary and clarify any words by returning to the selection or using reference works.

Source

Blachowicz, C., and Fisher, P.J. (2002). *Teaching Vocabulary in All Classrooms*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

General Resources

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